

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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SECTO 256

FOR DEPT PASS WHITE HOUSE FOR GENERAL SCOWCROFT AND NESSEN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT : TRANSCRIPT OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S MEETING WITH
PRESS IN DACCA FOLLOWING MEETING WITH BANGLADESH
PRIME MINISTER SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN AT THE
PRIME MINISTER'S RESIDENCE AT 1845 OCTOBER 30, 1974

1. TRANSCRIPT OF SUBJECT MEETING FOLLOWS: QUOTE LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I FIRST OF ALL WANT TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND TO ALL OF HIS ASSOCIATES FOR THE VERY WARM RECEPTION THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED HERE. I HAVE LONG ADMIRERD THE PRIME MINISTER. IT ISN'T OFTEN THAT ONE HAS THE PRIVILEGE OF MEETING SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN THE FATHER TO HIS COUNTRY AND WHO CREATED A NATION OUT OF HIS CONVICTIONS. WE HAD A VERY GOOD TALK IN NEW YORK IN WHICH I HAD THE PLEASURE OF MAKING HIS ACQUAINTANCE FOR THE FIRST TIME, AND WE CONTINUED OUR TALK HERE. WE HAD A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION AND THEN THE PRIME MINISTER EXPLAINED TO ME HIS ASPIRATIONS FOR HIS PEOPLE AND FOR HIS COUNTRY, AND BANGLADESH WOULDN'T EXIST IF THE PRIME MINISTER WERE NOT A MAN OF VAST CONCEPTIONS. WE REVIEWED THOSE, AND I EXPRESSED TO THE PRIME MINISTER THAT THE UNITED STATES, EVER SINCE THE INDEPENDENCE OF BANGLADESH, HAS BELIEVED VERY STRONGLY IN

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THE PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT OF BANGLADESH, AND WE WILL DO WHAT

IS WITHIN OUR CAPABILITIES TO HELP WITH THE PROBLEMS OF FOOD AND WITH THE PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT. IN THE AFTERNOON I REVIEWED SOME OF THOSE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND I HOPE WE CAN MAKE SOME PROGRESS TOWARDS STRAIGHTENING OUT SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES WE DISCUSSED IN GENERAL TERMS THEN THE LARGER ASPIRATIONS OF BANGLADESH WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, WHO ALSO TOOK THE OCCASION TO INVITE PRESIDENT FORD TO VISIT BANGLADESH.

QUESTION. SIR, WHAT ARE THE DIFFICULTIES?

ANSWER. WELL, THE DIFFICULTIES ARE NOT DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES, BUT PROBLEMS IN DEVELOPMENT, PROBLEMS IN THE BETTER UTILIZATION OF AMERICAN RESOURCES THAT HAVE BEEN MADE AVAILABLE AND MATTERS OF THIS KIND. IF ISN'T OFTEN THAT I HAVE THE PLEASURE OF VISITING A COUNTRY WITH WHICH WE HAVE NO DIFFICULTIES. OF COURSE THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WILL TALK WITH YOU AFTER I HAVE LEFT, AND I DO NOT KNOW WHAT HE IS GOING TO SAY. (LAUGHTER).

QUESTION. SIR, IN WHAT WAY CAN THE UNITED STATES ASSIST IN RESOLVING THESE DIFFICULTIES YOU ARE REFERRING TO?

ANSWER. WELL, ONE OF THE PROBLEMS OF BANGLADESH IS, OF COURSE, THE PROBLEM OF FOOD, AND THAT HAS TWO ASPECTS: THE FOOD THAT HAS TO BE IMPORTED, BUT IN THE LONG TERM THE FOOD THAT CAN BE GROWN INSIDE THE COUNTRY. THIS REQUIRES FERTILIZER, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OF VARIOUS KINDS AND IT IS IN THIS AREA WHERE THE LONG-TERM HOPE FOR BANGLADESH RESIDES AND WHERE THE UNITED STATES, I THINK, CAN BE HELPFUL IN VARIOUS WAYS. AND WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT FLOOD CONTROL IS ONE OF THE AREAS IN WHICH WE CAN COOPERATE.

QUESTION. SIR, DID YOU DISCUSS SUBCONTINENTAL RELATIONS?

ANSWER. YES, WE DISCUSSED RELATIONS ON THE SUBCONTINENT AND I EXPRESSED MY RESPECT FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S GENEROSITY OF SPIRIT IN CONTRIBUTING TO A PEACEFUL EVOLUTION ON THE SUBCONTINENT AND THE UNITED STATES, OF COURSE, SUPPORTS THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES ON THE SUBCONTINENT AND HOPES FOR A FULL NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS AMONG ALL THE STATES HERE.

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QUESTION. YOUR EXCELLENCY, CAN WE THEN HOPE FOR SOME SOLUTION OF THE EXISTING PROBLEMS BETWEEN BANGLADESH AND PAKISTAN IN RESPECT TO THE DIVISION OF ASSETS AND RESOURCES AND THE REPATRIATION OF PAKISTANIS?

ANSWER. THE PRIME MINISTER OF COURSE HAD EXPLAINED THESE PROBLEMS TO ME ELOQUENTLY ALREADY IN NEW YORK AND WE REVIEWED THEM AGAIN HERE AND I WILL HAVE AN OCCASION TO DISCUSS

THEM IN ISLAMABAD WHERE I AM GOING TOMORROW. BUT I HAVE MADE IT A PRACTICE NOT TO MAKE ANY PREDICTIONS ABOUT ONE COUNTRY WHILE I AM VISITING ANOTHER COUNTRY.

QUESTION. ARE YOU TAKING ANY PROPOSALS FROM HERE TO DISCUSS IN ISLAMABAD?

ANSWER. NO, THE PRIME MINISTER EXPLAINED HIS GENERAL POINT OF VIEW TO ME AND I HAVE NO SPECIFIC PROPOSALS, I AM NOT ACTING AS MEDIATOR, BUT AS A FRIEND.

QUESTION. WILL YOU USE YOUR GOOD OFFICES IN THIS RESPECT TO PERSUADE PAKISTAN TO COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING WITH BANGLADESH TO SOLVE THE REMAINING PROBLEMS?

ANSWER, WELL, I WILL EXPLAIN WHAT I HAVE LEARNED HERE.

QUESTION. YOUR EXCELLENCY, DID WITH INDIA WITH BANGLADESH?

ANSWER. WE DID NOT DISCUSS IT, BUT IN PRINCIPLE WE ARE NOT ADVERSE TO IT AND THIS IS A MATTER THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO TAKE UP.

QUESTION. YOUR EXCELLENCY, ARE YOU CONVINCED THAT THE ECONOMY OF BANGLADESH IS VIABLE?

ANSWER. I THINK THAT BANGLADESH -- I AM NOT AN ECONOMIST-- BUT I THINK THAT THERE IS GREAT POTENTIAL IN THIS COUNTRY BUT AS IN MANY OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES THERE IS A NEED FOR RESOURCES TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT AND THE PROBLEM IS TO DO IT ON A SUFFICIENT SCALE SO THAT ONE IS NOT SIMPLY GOING FROM CRISIS TO CRISIS.

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QUESTION. IN VIEW OF THE REPORTS THAT FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON IS CRITICALLY ILL, MIGHT THIS ALTER YOUR CURRENT TRAVEL PLANS?

ANSWER. WELL, I DO NOT WANT TO SPECULATE ON AN EVENTUALITY THAT I HOPE WILL NEVER ARISE.
KISSINGER

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